

Developing the new Quality Improvement Framework (formerly the School Comparison Project) by implementing the Further Actions outlined in October 2015's School Comparison Project Report 2016 to 2020

Recommendation 1: Set out clear priorities and actions at local authority level for improving further on Shetland's very strong overall attainment record

Further Actions

An Attainment four year Action Plan from 2016 to 2020 has been developed with seven action points:

1. Decide upon and implement in schools a common and effective approach to Shetland's monitoring, tracking and moderation for the Broad General Education, for ages 3 -15, taking into account the new National Improvement Framework, including proposed standardised assessments for pupils at the end of P1, P4, P7 and S3 from 2017.
2. To use nationally and locally collected data and knowledge to evaluate the performance of Shetland's pupils in national qualifications, and to set annual actions that will improve the specific areas where performance is weaker.
3. Scrutinise and record at Local Authority level, pupils' performance in Wider Achievement.
4. Provide support and structure to the existing Subject Development Groups (SDG).
5. Create a longer-term plan to create the conditions for improved pupil motivation and engagement.
6. Develop a strategy for professional learning that centres around feedback from the Professional Review and Development process, and provides leadership development and pathways at all levels.
7. Increase the skills of and strategies used by teachers and Parent Councils to increase the level of Parental Engagement in children's learning.

Recommendation 2: Carry out a review of promoted posts and management structures in Shetland's school estate

Further Actions

1. Within the Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers (LNCT), implement a revised management structure model for the secondary school estate.
2. Within the LNCT, clarify the role of non-teaching depute head teachers in respect of providing the equivalent of one day of cover per week over the school session.
3. Within the LNCT, develop a whole school remit for junior high school principal teachers, which will apply to new post holders.
4. Within the LNCT, develop a set of principles and expectations around management time for new principal teachers posts.
5. Within the LNCT, develop a local agreement around management time for primary schools with five to seven classes.
6. Explore the concept of a shared headship model between Baltasound Junior High School and Mid Yell Junior High School with staff, pupils, parents and the wider communities of these schools but do so no earlier than 2017.
7. Management arrangements for remote isles schools will be included as part of a wider policy statement on them (Fetlar, Foula, Fair Isles, Papa Stour and Skerries) to support their viability.

Recommendation 3: Carry out a further review of secondary teaching posts with a view to identifying further opportunities to share teaching staff

Further Actions

1. Continue to implement the current sharing/recruitment strategy when secondary teaching posts become vacant.
2. Within the LNCT, develop a set of principles to ensure that the conditions of service for teachers working between two settings are adhered to and equitable for all.
3. Within the LNCT, develop a policy whereby an agreed amount of staff absence is covered internally using surplus internal class contact capacity before incurring costs of bringing in supply teacher cover.
4. Within the LNCT, develop a policy whereby any surplus class contact time can be allocated to development undertaken by a teacher at either school or Local Authority level e.g. work associated the School Improvement Plan or a task delegated through a subject development group to benefit teaching and learning in all secondary settings.

Recommendation 4

New focus group on curriculum and timetables to encapsulate some of the further actions in this recommendation and work stream 1 of the Shetland Learning Partnership.

Remit of the new focus group

1. Take forward the decisions made by the SLP in October 2015 in respect of the proposed Common Curriculum Structure in the BGE and Senior Phase.
 - Consider trends in other local authorities in respect of current models.
 - Consider attainment locally and nationally in relation to number of subjects studied.
 - Continue to work with Education Scotland.
 - Continued engagement with all stakeholders on this issue.
 - Reflect on local and national inspection feedback.

It remains the intention to make further decisions on this in early 2017 with further proposals to the QIF Project Board at this point. As agreed in October 2015, any secondary setting wishing to implement the preferred common curriculum structure in the Senior Phase will be considered by the QIF Project Board.

2. Support the implementation of the common timetable structure from May 2018 across all secondary settings.
3. Range and Menu of Subjects: Consider further the S4 core subject list and local flexibility concept.
4. Develop a set of principles which would describe a viable class size without introducing a set criteria on viable class sizes.

All members of the Shetland Learning Partnership work stream 1 are invited to join this focus group, which will also consist of a small number of teachers, teaching union officers and parent council chairs.

Organisation of classes (not part of the remit of the new focus group):

1. A comprehensive assessment on the learning and teaching implications of compositing classes in early secondary education to be undertaken.
2. Explore further S1 and S2 being organised as a single class where the two year groups combined have no more than 15 pupils in total for practical classes and no more than 20 pupils for non-practical classes for the junior high schools where it may apply: Mid Yell Junior High School and Whalsay School.
3. S1-2 compositing is already in place in Baltasound Junior High School and consideration will be given to extending this to S1 to S3 in this school when the three year groups combined have no more than 15 pupils in total for practical subjects and no more than 20 pupils for non-practical subjects.
4. Further discussion with Anderson High School and Brae High School on delivering Higher and Advanced Higher courses in the same class if there are no more than 10 pupils in total studying the subject (the Higher and Advanced Higher pupils combined being no more than 10) and providing that National 5 is not being taught in the class as well.

Opportunity for young people to move to other schools to access subjects as part of their learning programmes (not part of the remit of the new focus group):

1. Allocations policy to be developed for halls of residence accommodation.

Please note in line with Shetland Islands Council decisions earlier this year, pupils will continue to be able to move to other schools at the end of S3 without incurring additional transport or hostel costs. This provision **will not** be extended to pupils from the start of S3 following further exploration.

Recommendation 5: Review the local authority's approaches to quality assurance in schools as part of a wider review of Children's Services, Schools and Quality Improvement Staffing

Further Actions

- A new School Improvement Framework, to be implemented in 2016, will sit within the Quality Improvement Framework.
- This new framework will focus on self evaluation, school improvement planning, sharing practice, leadership, induction and development, quality assurance and support from the centre to schools and tackling unnecessary bureaucracy.
- The framework will include revised practice/guidance around:
 1. School Improvement Planning and Standards and Quality Reporting.
 2. Visits by central education officers to schools.
 3. Team Improvement Visits by central officers, and peer school managers to schools.
 4. Professional review and development, including leadership development.

Review of Staffing: following initial exploration and discussion, a formal options appraisal exercise will be carried out in 2016 of Schools and Quality Improvement staffing to consider a structure that supports this new School Improvement Framework.